

Saving Grace

by theolims

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Summary: "Throw me to the wolves and I will return leading the pack."

- Seneca / They wanted a champion, a leader, and a survivor? Fine.

Jason will be more: He'll be their saving grace.

Saving Grace

****SAVING GRACE**

>BY THEOLIMS

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><p>SUMMARY: Jason feels the pressure of their expectations for him. He feels it like it's his death sentence when the gods praise him to his face and mock behind his back. He feels it when Lupa snarls that weakness will never be tolerated. He feels it when the Romans expect him to go into the First Cohort because he is a son of Jupiter, the king of the gods.

They wanted their champion, her survivor, their leader.

But Jason wanted to be none of those things " He wanted to be _more_ than they expected him to be. And he wanted to be something they didn't expect him to be. He wanted to reach to the light and make his own path.

He wanted to be their saving grace.

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><p>PROLOGUE

****JASON**** stared at the Great She-Wolf. Lupa stared back at him.

He was the first to look away.

He could hear the growl that was threatening to break through her voice as she snapped at him a sharp tone, "Weakness will never be tolerated." And it felt like the hundredth time she had spoken those words to him that week alone. "If you are not strong, then you are weak, and if you are weak then you will be eaten. Child of Jupiter or not."

Jason nodded.

"_Never _look away from the enemy."

Then she launched herself at him and he fell onto his back. He screamed when her teeth sank into the flesh on his shoulder, but he wouldn't cry. Crying was for the weak and the weak were the ones who were eaten.

And Jason didn't want to be eaten.

So he grabbed her muzzle and pushed it away from him as hard as he could. Somehow, she moved, and he forced himself to sit up even though his shoulder _burned_ each time he breathed. Even his eyes stung.

Lupa looked at him with something that resembled pride. Jason still felt like she wanted to eat him for breakfast as he tried his best to not curl into himself. Because that shows weakness as well, and he wouldn't - _couldn't _- be weak.

"Perhaps there is hope for you yet," she said eventually. Her golden eyes were unreadable again. "But there is still a long way for a weakling like you to get there."

He stared at her back as she silently padded away. And as soon as she was gone, he allowed himself to cry.

I want my real mama.

* * *

><p>Jason jerked back to reality when he felt a hand touch his shoulder. He whirled around, automatically reaching for his gladius - and then he relaxed as his brain caught up with his body.<p>

He wasn't in Camp Jupiter.

He was on the Argo II, heading toward Camp Half-Blood.

And that was Percy. Not Lupa. Not Octavian. Not somebody who wanted to kill him.

"You okay?" Percy asked. He nodded - _I am now, _he wanted to say, but he kept it to himself. He didn't know what it was about Percy that made him feel uneasy around him sometimes, but he was pretty sure that he was smarter than he acted. Percy leaned over the railing and looked down at the ground - The lifeless, unstimulating ground.

Jason looked back in the direction they had come from - Back toward Camp Jupiter.

"Do you remember everything?" Jason asked. Percy looked at him with that unreadable gaze, and his shoulder ached from wounds that his body hadn't forgotten.

"I think so. Don't you?"

Jason shrugged. "I thought I did but . . ." He hesitated. There were things about Camp Jupiter that he hadn't told them - Things that he never wanted them to know.

Percy waited.

- But Percy had been there too. He'd been their praetor too for a short time (somehow - He really didn't know how a Greek became praetor but that was probably a long story for another day). And the brandings were displayed on his arm too.

(He thought that there may be more Roman in him than they realized, just like he was more Greek than Roman now too.)

He licked his lips. "I had a dream. Well, actually, I think it was a memory. About Lupa."

Percy's back straightened and he saw the way his gaze hardened minutely. He doesn't like her either, he thought. He hauled himself up on the railing and allowed his legs to dangle over the edge, and he took a moment to appreciate just how free he felt now.

"Lupa scares me," Percy said eventually, and he looked at him. He was surprised, because this was the boy - no, the man - who had faced Kronos and Gaea head on. Not much could or would scare him. Percy fiddled with his beaded necklace absentmindedly. "Something about her makes me nervous for some reason. I don't think she liked me much."

Jason couldn't help but snort at that. Percy's lips twitched.

"You're Greek," he deadpanned. "She's Roman."

"True," he said. "But it's something more than that. Camp Jupiter too . . . Something about it makes me nervous. I don't know if it's just the fact I'm a Greek demigod or if it's the whole Hate-on-Neptune thing . . ."

"No, it's the camp." He said thoughtlessly. Percy looked up at him, and he saw the confusion brimming in his green eyes. Jason wanted to hit himself - Now he was going to be curious. "Any chance you'll forget that?"

Percy studied him and Jason felt uncomfortable under that gaze. It wasn't anything at all like Lupa's glare, but it had the same piercing quality to it that made him feel like he was x-raying through him, into his soul.

"I will, if that's what you want."

Jason blinked. He hadn't expected him to actually agree to his question. And then he felt unsure, which really annoyed him because

he thought he was _done _with feeling unsure.

"It's been slowly coming back to me," he said eventually. He frowned, trying to pull his thoughts back together. "Sort of. I think I've been deliberately repressing my memories but . . . Camp Jupiter isn't anything at all like Camp Half-Blood. It isn't a safe haven for demigods. And New Rome . . . I think I was trying to become consul. That's why I was praetor. I wanted to change it. But I can't remember why even though I know I had a good reason."

They stayed silent for a long time. Percy breathed. Jason tried to count the stars.

"I haven't said anything because I thought it was just more strict than Camp, but for the time I spent there, I felt . . . repressed. I think? Hated, and repressed. But I just dismissed it."

Jason shook his head. "Your feeling was right." He sighed. "I wish I could remember more."

"How about you tell me what you _do _remember?" Jason looked back down at Percy, who was watching him. He smiled slightly. "I mean, we have all night, don't we? I'm definitely not going back to sleep anytime soon."

Jason read between the lines - _I had a nightmare _- but he didn't comment on it.

"Can't promise you it'll all make sense," he said. "It's a mess even inside my own head."

Percy grinned lopsidedly. "You should listen to Annabeth when she's going on about a project, man. That's what a mess is."

He rolled his eyes. "I'm serious."

"I know," he said. "And I'm curious."

Jason hesitated for one more moment, and then he sighed. "Well," he began, "I know that I was kidnapped when I was little and taken to the Wolf House . . ."

* * *

><p>Author's Note: I'm blaming Kishia for this. I just - She tagged me in a post on tumblr, and then I started to explain the similarities between the Roman Republic and Camp Jupiter, and then . . . This popped into my brain. And wouldn't leave me alone. And then I had to write it down.

I'd like to say it'll be in the 10-20 chapter range, but I said that for ACOGL and we all know how long _that's _become so . . .
Whoops?

I'm dedicating this to Angie (AlwaysLunar) because her birthday was yesterday and I'm on a frantic writing spree for ACOGL, which means I'm not posting because that'll just break the flow, haha. Happy birthday, Angie! *hugs*

End
file.